

maintained said claims in dependent form, as it is earnestly believed that the claims from which they depend will be found allowable.

Claims 34, 39, and 48 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over U.S. Patent No. 6,104,548 (Nakayama) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,724,195 (Enomoto, et al.). All rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claim 34 recites, inter alia, a first (negative) lens unit (+/-/+ ) and a second (positive) lens unit (+/-/+ ) with separation varying during zooming.

However, Applicant respectfully submits that neither Nakayama, et al. nor Enomoto, et al., even in combination, assuming, arguendo, that the documents could be combined, discloses or suggests at least the above-discussed claimed features as recited, inter alia, in Claim 34. The Official Action relies upon lens units “I” and “II” in Fig. 11 of Nakayama, et al., and asserts that in view of Fig. 1 of Enomoto, et al. they may be considered a single lens unit; however, Applicant respectfully notes that during zooming “I” is stationary while “II” moves and therefore they do not constitute the claimed lens unit. It is further respectfully submitted that there has been no showing of any indication of motivation in the cited documents that would lead one having ordinary skill in the art to arrive at the above-discussed claimed features.

Claims 40, 41, 42, 46, 47, and 49 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 4,993,814 (Hata). Claim 43 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Hata in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,236,522 B1 (Shimizu). All rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claim 40 recites, inter alia, first and second lens units as claimed wherein the movement locus of the first lens unit during zooming from the wide-angle end to the telephoto end includes a part which is movement to the object side.

However, Applicant respectfully submits that neither Hata nor Shimizu, even in combination, assuming, arguendo, that the documents could be combined, discloses or suggests at least the above-discussed claimed features as recited, inter alia, in Claim 40. The Official Action relies upon Fig. 5 of Hata; however, Applicant respectfully submits that, as can be seen from the “T” and “W” in that figure, the lens unit I moves to the image side during zooming from the wide-angle end to the telephoto end. It is further respectfully submitted that there has been no showing of any indication of motivation in the cited documents that would lead one having ordinary skill in the art to arrive at the above-discussed claimed features.

Claim 46 recites, inter alia, that the first lens unit consists of in order from the object side to the image side, positive, negative, negative, and positive lens elements, with the second lens unit consisting of three positive lens elements and a negative lens element.

Claim 47 recites, inter alia, that the second lens unit consisting of in order from the object side to the image side positive, positive, negative, and positive lens elements.

However, Applicant respectfully submits that Hata fails to disclose or suggest at least the above-discussed claimed features as recited, inter alia, in Claims 46 and 47.

The dependent claims are also submitted to be patentable because they set forth additional aspects of the present invention and are dependent from independent claims discussed above. Therefore, separate and individual consideration of each dependent claim is respectfully requested.

Applicant submits that this application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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